

ORIGINAL

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EX PARTE OR LATE FILED

January 26, 1998

Ms. Magalie Salas
Secretary
Federal Communications Commission
1919 M Street, NW, Room 222
Washington, DC 20554

**NOTICE OF ORAL
AND WRITTEN EX PARTE**

RECEIVED

JAN 26 1998

FEDERAL COMMUNICATIONS COMMISSION
OFFICE OF THE SECRETARY

Re: Billed Party Preference (CC Dkt. 92-77)

Dear Ms. Salas:

I have been requested to submit this notification of an oral and written ex parte contact in the above-referenced matter. On January 21, 1998, Mason Harris, President, of Robin Technologies, Inc., met with Paul Gallant of Commissioner Tristani's office to discuss the status of various issues currently on record in the above-referenced docket and subsequently submitted a follow-up letter. (I have attached a copy of the follow-up letter of January 22 sent by Mr. Harris to Paul Gallant which recaps Mr. Harris' concerns and the issues discussed at the meeting.) I apologize for the delay in submitting this letter.

If you desire any further information, please contact the undersigned.

Sincerely,



Albert H. Kramer

AHK/rw
Enclosure
cc: Mr. Paul Gallant

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Robin Technologies, Inc.

"The Better Payphone Company"

12156 Parklawn Drive, Rockville, MD 20852
301-468-0385 * FAX 301-468-0387

January 22, 1998

Mr. Paul F. Gallant
Legal Advisor
Federal Communications Commission
1919 M Street, N.W. - Room 826
Washington, DC 20554

Dear Mr. Gallant,

Thank you for your consideration in meeting with Mr. Harry Herskovitz and me to discuss various payphone issues, and we look forward to again sharing our ideas and concerns with you.

In regard to the main issue in our discussion, the requirement to provide at the payphone user's option an immediate rate quote for long distance OSP calls, we feel this can only benefit users. However, as we expressed, fully informing and benefiting payphone users would require that rate quotes be available for all non-coin calls, especially dial-around, and is also necessary to ensure that payphone providers are not placed, once again, at a competitive disadvantage.

As a consumer, I would value the ability to receive an immediate rate quote, even if I have dialed around to AT&T, who I shared with you is the carrier I use when placing 0+ calls from any payphone. Although you expressed that a payphone user who dials his own carrier does not need the option of obtaining a rate quote, it would still be a tremendous benefit to me to know before the call is placed what my selected carrier will charge me. Rates change frequently and I would be very tempted to use this rate quote option as a means to ensure that my selected carrier is still the best value. I expect competition will result in additional rate and service options, and the ability to compare quotes from multiple companies, including the payphone's OSP, can only serve to assist my carrier selection decision.

As a payphone operator, requiring only my OSP and not all IXC's to provide the option of a rate quote hurts my business in at least two ways. First, users who place a 0+ call will be delayed as the option choice is presented. This delay, in the form of a message instructing the user to press "X" if he wants to hear a rate quote or "Y" if he prefers the call to go straight through, will not appear if he dials around. Frankly, my chosen OSP at the payphone may even be the customer's preferred carrier, but he would dial around just to avoid the delay in completing his call! Second, as a payphone provider, I anticipate offering lower rates than the major carriers at some locations, but the consumer has no way of verifying at the payphone my rate claim if his carrier is not required to provide the same immediate rate quote option.

Should rate quotes not be required from all IXC's, an unintended consequence might even be a carrier who will not provide OSP service to payphone providers so as to avoid being required to provide immediate rate quotes. The power of multi-million dollar advertising

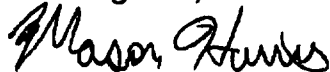
campaigns to influence purchasing decisions is evident, even if lower prices or better value is available from competitors who lack a monumental marketing budget.

The rate quote option is a good idea, if required for all OSP calls. As a consumer I would benefit; as a payphone provider I would not be placed at a competitive disadvantage, and I can even turn this into an opportunity to increase my services and reduce some rates to the payphone user. From a technical standpoint, any IXC that can provide a rate quote as the payphone's selected OSP can also provide rate quotes when accessed through dial-around.

In regard to how a payphone user can respond to the option for a rate quote, I do not know of a technical reason why this would require more than a one or two digit keypad entry. I am not claiming any expertise in the area of either switch or payphone development, but I agree with your assessment that a payphone owner who requires a several digit entry to receive the rate quote probably would not be operating in the spirit of the regulation.

Mr. Gallant, I hope our meeting and this follow-up letter are helpful to you. I look forward to speaking with you again, and once more assure you that the invitation for you to visit my office and see how we manage and operate our payphone business is still open. Thanks again for your consideration, and please do not hesitate to contact me should you need anything else.

Best regards,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Mason Harris".

Mason Harris
President